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ABSTRACT

This four-part report summarizes the efforts of the Organization of American States (OAS) to promote multilateral cooperation in the area of vocational education and then briefly examines the potential role of community colleges in the United States with regard to these cooperative endeavors. Part I delineates the origins, mandates, and funding policies of the OAS Multinational Project on Technical Education and Vocational Training (MPTEVT), which was initiated as part of OAS's Regional Educational Development Program to sponsor projects that enhance vocational education research and training. Part II outlines 20 specific problem areas relating to educational research, manpower training, and curricular innovation that have been or will be addressed by MPTEVT projects during 1980-81 and 1982-83. Part III delineates the specific objectives of a study conducted by the OAS to investigate the status of vocational and technical education in the Caribbean and Latin America and to determine the correlation between job training and employment in OAS countries. Finally, Part IV summarizes the community-based, open-access nature of community colleges in the United States and outlines six suggestions for improved cooperation between these institutions and the OAS. These suggestions focus on increased information exchange and the inclusion of Latin American Studies courses in community college curricula. (JP)

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OAS INTER-AMERICAN COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION
AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND ITS FUTURE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PROGRAMS
OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF THE UNITED STATES

Study prepared for the Convention of the American
Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC)
April 20-22, 1981
Washington, D.C.

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OAS INTER-AMERICAN COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF
TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

CHAPTER I. Background of the Multinational Project on Technical Education
and Vocational Training of the Regional Educational Development
Program of the Organization of American States

1. Inter-American Cooperation in the Field of Education,
Science, and Culture

With the adoption of the Charter of the Organization of American States in 1948, the initial structures and standards to stimulate cultural cooperation among the member countries were established. The Inter-American Cultural Council and the Committee for Cultural Action were created as associated bodies, and the Department of Cultural Affairs was created in the Pan American Union.

Beginning in 1967, several important resolutions were adopted by the OAS reaffirming the principles of inter-American solidarity and cooperation, and strengthening activities in the field of education, science, and culture.

The OAS organs engaged in educational, scientific, and cultural cooperation underwent changes, pursuant to the amendments to the Charter adopted in Buenos Aires in 1967.

At their meeting in Punta del Este, Uruguay, on April 14, 1967, the Chiefs of State of the American nations signed the "Declaration of the Presidents of America," and its "Action Program," affirming that "Education is a sector of high priority in the overall development policy of Latin American nations." They consequently expressed their intention to "give a decisive impetus to education for development, by a combination of internal and multinational efforts.

2. Creation of the Regional Programs

On the basis of this Declaration, and for the purpose of carrying out its educational development objectives, the Inter-American Cultural Council (CIC) in February 1968, at its Fifth Meeting, held in Maracay, Venezuela, adopted the "Resolution of Maracay," by which it established the Regional Educational Development Program and the Regional Scientific and Technological Development Programs, and a multilateral special fund, based on voluntary contributions by the countries to finance the operations of the activities.

The Regional Programs represent the most ambitious effort made by the Organization of American States in promoting, developing, and bringing to fruition among the member states the principles of inter-American solidarity and cooperation in the fields of education, science, and culture.

The general and common features of the Regional Programs are the following:

- They form part of a multilateral strategy of the countries of the region that stimulates factors that imply a cooperative and joint effort.
- They are designed to promote the coordination of programs that the countries carry out for encouraging education, science, technology, and culture with those that pursue national development and regional integration.
- They are designed to assign priority to the multinational efforts called for in the Declaration of the Presidents of America.
- Projects of the Regional Programs should be carried out in cooperation with the national agencies responsible for the educational, scientific, technological, and cultural policies of each country.
- They should assign special importance to instruments that contain multinational and multiplier elements.
- They should pay special attention to projects that produce results that can be used by all or several countries, and those whose effect on the process of economic and social development can be noted in a reasonable period of time.

The Resolution of Maracay specified the following objectives for the Regional Educational Development Program:

- a. To encourage and complement national efforts in order to raise the quality of education and accelerate expansion of educational systems at all levels, to improve educational administration and planning, and to adjust educational systems to the demands of economic, social, and cultural development;
- b. To promote research and the introduction of innovations in educational and allied fields;

- c. To intensify inter-American cooperation in educational matters, in accordance with the standards of the Charter of the Organization of American States and the mandates concerning education contained in the Declaration of the Presidents of America;
- d. To promote the integration of Latin America, through education, in order to raise the economic and social level of the region and as an important step toward the creation of a Latin American community in the educational and cultural personality of the peoples.

3. Origin and Mandates

Multinational Project on Technical Education and Vocational Training of the Regional Educational Development Program

The Chiefs of State of the American nations pledged themselves, in the "Declaration of the Presidents of America," to assign priority to "reorganizing of vocational education, when necessary, taking into account the structure of the labor force and the foreseeable manpower needs of each country's development." They also affirmed that in the reorganization of the educational structures, "an increase in opportunities following general education, including opportunities for learning a trade or a specialty or for continuing general education" would be necessary, as well as "the gradual elimination of barriers between vocational and general education."

With the creation of the Regional Educational Development Program (PREDE) at the fifth regular meeting of the Inter-American Cultural Council, in Maracay, Venezuela, in 1968, technical education became one of the priority activities of PREDE. The sixth regular meeting of the Council, held in Port of Spain, Trinidad, in 1969, reconfirmed the approval given in Maracay to the Multinational Technical Education and Vocational Training Program.

The primary objective of this project is to cooperate with the member countries of the Organization in solving common problems that affect or restrict the development of their technical education and vocational training.

The multinational action plan is designed to mobilize both country and PREDE resources. Instead of creating new regional institutions, it encourages the utilization of existing agencies within the countries that are able to offer their experience and means for the benefit of all other Latin American nations.

Specific areas on which the project has focused resources and action are:

- Basic and advanced training of staff in the fields of teaching, supervision, technical branches, and management for technical education and vocational training.
- Research, experimentation, and innovation, in this educational field.
- Improvement and increase in teaching materials for this educational substructure.
- Technical aid to the countries that request it, particularly to those of lesser relative development.
- Coordination of technical education with general education and vocational training (job training).

4. Programming Mechanisms

The OAS/PREDE contributions to projects are nonreimbursable grants. Programs are biennial in nature. The projects are presented by the countries themselves through the agencies that they designate as liaison offices with the Program, which are known as National Liaison Agencies (ONE). There is a responsible institution for each project, which may be either from the public or the private sector. The Secretariat cooperates in preparing projects, if this assistance is requested.

All projects are received on specified dates, usually ten months prior to the beginning of the biennium for which they are desired to be programmed. A format has been designed for project presentation. This specifies the various aspects that the project must contain: Background information and justification; general and specific objectives (concret goals and results anticipated at the end of each period and at completion of the project); expected impact and benefits; structure of the project and organization of the activities to be carried out; the indicators to measure the quantitative and qualitative progress of the project; resources requested from the OAS, with a breakdown for each expenditure heading, and an indication of the national counterpart contribution, similarly broken down.

The sum total of projects is evaluated by specialists of the Department of Educational Affairs, based on an instrument for the evaluation of new projects. Based on this background, the

management of the Program prepares the proposed program-budget of PREDE for the corresponding biennium, and this is then included in the Proposed Program-Budget of the General Secretariat. The evaluated projects, whether or not they are included in the Proposed Program-Budget, together with their respective evaluations, are submitted by the management of the Program to the Inter-American Committee on Education, a technical body composed of five educators who are elected by the member states, but who do not represent individual countries. The Proposed Program-Budget, together with the recommendations of the Committee, are submitted to the governing bodies that participate in the approval of the budget of the Organization.

Normally, once the Proposed Program-Budget is approved by the Permanent Executive Committee of the Inter-American Council for Education, Science, and Culture (CEPCIECC), no major changes are introduced.

5. Financing

The Regional Programs are financed by the Multilateral Special Fund of the Inter-American Council for Education, Science, and Culture (FEMCIECC), created by the Resolution of Maracay, and organized and managed by CIECC. The Fund is composed mainly of the voluntary contributions of the member states, as pledged at the regular annual meeting of CIECC. The percentages established in the contributions to the Program-Budget of the General Secretariat of the Organization are taken into consideration. For every dollar contributed by the Latin American countries, the United States contributes two dollars to the Fund, in accordance with the 66/34 ratio. In accordance with Point 29 of Resolution CIC-1/68 (Resolution of Maracay), "An activity or project presented by a member state may be initiated, as regards those aspects that will benefit that state, only when it has made a first payment of its voluntary contribution pledged for a given budgetary period of the Regional Programs."

CHAPTER II. Programming Guidelines of the Multinational Project on Technical Education and Vocational Training of the Regional Educational Development Program (PREDE), for the Biennio 1980-1981 and 1982-1983

1. Biennium 1980-1981

- To promote studies and research on the status of technical education and vocational training in the countries of the region.

- Programs that comprise as a priority element the training of skilled labor in the fields and at the levels required by the economic development of the countries.
- Projects that lead to the upgrading of the technological level of agricultural and rural workers through the training of middle-level technicians in this field.
- To intensify manpower training, especially at the intermediate industrial level. To upgrade the level of skilled and semiskilled workers.
- Projects that correlate formal technical education and vocational training by linking together the formal educational system and the educational methods used in the parasystem. To encourage closer cooperation between business and the secondary education system, so that work can be used to serve as an educational means that contributes to the integral training of the student. On-the-job training for workers through nonformal instruction at work.
- To promote and intensify joint programs with other international and regional agencies (IDB, World Bank, ILO, CINTERFOR, UNESCO, U.S. AID) that will provide greater technical cooperation, at both the national and the multinational levels, in the development of technical education and vocational training systems in the countries of the region.

2. Programming Guidelines for 1982-1983

In the next biennium, projects of this area will focus on programs that respond to priority needs of the region's countries. Once the results of the study that is underway become available on an evaluation of technical education and vocational training in Latin America, the guidelines for projects in the 1982-1983 biennium will be geared to providing technical assistance to the countries of the region, in response to the requests that the countries themselves may make. Emphasis will be placed on manpower training, studies and research, the introduction of innovative measures in curricula, and the use of new methods, with special attention to programs that are susceptible of being solved over the short or medium term.

By way of examples, some of the principal aspects or factors that the technical education and vocational training projects of PREDE might deal with in the biennium 1982-1983, and others that may be results of the aforementioned evaluation, are:

- Pilot projects to experiment with new plans, methods, and means of education, training, and research to solve the problems caused by a lack of technical teaching staffs.
- Projects to intensify manpower training programs at the managerial, teaching, and technical levels.
- Projects that will promote the basic and advanced training of skilled labor on the job site, in technical and in vocational schools, or through apprenticeship programs of students, to meet the future demand.
- Projects addressed to the advanced training of middle-level technicians, through post-secondary college courses.
- To encourage studies and research to determine for the short or medium term, the requirements for skilled workers and training of middle-level technicians in the various sectors and levels of production.
- Programs that will contribute to improving the development of educational planning services, school supervision and evaluation, and technical and teaching research means.
- Joint projects comprising formal education and vocational training for a large number of workers who perform semi-skilled tasks. To coordinate programs with business enterprises in carrying out courses and training activities that respond to specific needs, both for minor and adult workers.
- Continuation of the study on the evaluation of technical education and vocational training in Latin America, by incorporating the countries of the Caribbean area, and approaching the stages of sectoral studies of manpower, in order to determine present and future needs of technical and skilled labor personnel, required by the national development plans.
- Agricultural pilot projects focusing on the revision and preparation of coherent and well coordinated curricula for agricultural education, and the training of teaching personnel and technicians in the agricultural fields.
- Projects for the rural population. Technical agricultural schools at the intermediate level to meet technical requirements for more technical field work and agrarian reform, in accordance with the national economic and social development plans.

- Projects that will promote vocational training for women. Creation of training facilities to provide new training opportunities for women, in areas directly related to the job market. Program that will foster experimentation and innovation to set the guidelines for extensive and overall changes in this type of instruction, in both the urban and the rural environments.
- To lend support to projects that stress the end pursued by intermediate technical training programs, which is access to jobs, through various means such as internships in businesses, special financing systems for the activities of former trainees, etc.
- To carry out nonformal training projects for the training of middle-level technicians through post-secondary non-college courses.
- To provide technical assistance to joint programs of non-formal education and vocational training for semi-skilled workers, in coordination with the Inter-American Center for Research and Documentation on Vocational Training (CINTERFOR).

CHAPTER III. Technical Education and Vocational Training in Latin America and the Caribbean

The decades of the 1960s and 1970s have brought events that made the member countries of the Organization of American States (OAS) realize the importance of technical education and vocational training in the process of development of their economies. There is a direct relationship between the characteristics of the economies of the countries of the region and the type and size of the manpower resources that should be trained for the advancement of the process.

Based on this assumption, and aware of this interdependence, the OAS took on the task of carrying out a study on technical education and vocational training in Latin American and the Caribbean. All the OAS member states are participating in this study. Also cooperating are the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), the World Bank, the Inter-American Center for Research and Documentation on Vocational Training (CINTERFOR), the Regional Educational Office of UNESCO for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Regional Office of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and the Regional Educational Development Program (PREDE) of the OAS. The multinational Center for Technical Education and Vocational Training of PREDE in

Cuernavaca, México, prepared four instruments for the purpose, and through these the data provided by the countries, and the participating regional and international agencies, are being collected and analyzed.

The provisional report on the study has been forwarded to the heads of agencies responsible for technical education and vocational training in the participating countries and international agencies, to allow them to make an evaluation and contribute any observations. The final version of the study report is expected to be completed in June, 1981, and it will be widely distributed and publicized, particularly in the countries of the region and among the international technical cooperation and financing agencies.

1. General Objective of the Study

- To define concrete actions to be presented to the corresponding officials in the Latin American and Caribbean countries and the international agencies for their consideration, designed to strengthen, expand, improve, and coordinate for technical education and vocational training over the next few years, to contribute adequately to the manpower training effort required by the development process of those countries.

2. Specific Objectives

- To learn the present development objectives, plans, programs or projects as well as those for the immediate future; and significant results and problems emerged over the past ten years in the field of technical education and vocational training in the participating countries.
- To learn significant results and problems that have occurred in the past ten years in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in the carrying out of technical cooperation and financial action in the area of technical education and vocational training in coordination with international agencies or through bilateral agreements.
- To learn present technical and financial cooperation plans, programs, projects, actions, standards and procedures of the countries and of the international agencies for the improvement of technical education and vocational training in Latin America and the Caribbean.

- To define specific and significant actions for presentation to the countries and the international agencies participating in the study for the optimum utilization of technical and financial cooperation earmarked to complement national efforts for developing their technical education and vocational training systems.
- To provide the management of the Regional Educational Development Program of the OAS with up-to-date information and suggestions on significant aspects of technical education and vocational training in Latin America and the Caribbean, to serve as:
 - i) Background for making the decisions necessary to guide and organize technical education and vocational training projects and actions, in accordance with the reorganization of PREDE, authorized by CIECC at its ninth regular annual meeting;
 - ii) Background for defining the programming guidelines of PREDE, in the field of technical education and vocational training, for the biennium 1982-1983.

3. Composition of Country Information

- Agencies that are responsible for managing technical education, vocational training, and international technical cooperation and financing - year they were created and their present objectives.
- Structure of the national educational system in 1980.
- Organizational chart of the agencies that supervise technical education and vocational training, and international technical and financial cooperation, in 1980.
- Evaluation of enrollment and financial resources for technical education and vocational training in the period 1969-1978.
- Research, experiments, or basic studies on technical education and vocational training carried out in the period 1969-1978.
- Significant problems and results in the field of technical education and vocational training in the years 1969-1978.
- Bilateral or international projects or actions for the improvement of technical education and vocational training in the period 1969-1978.

- Significant problems and results that have occurred in formulating, carrying out, and evaluating international technical and financial cooperation for the improvement of technical education and vocational training.
- Present official standards used by the Ministry or Secretariat for Education for presenting and processing requests for international technical and financial cooperation.
- Plans, programs, or projects under way or to be started in the immediate future for improving technical education and vocational training.
- Appropriate actions for the better utilization of the resources received through international technical and financial cooperation in the field of technical education and vocational training.
- Priority needs and problems in technical education and vocational training that require international technical and financial cooperation to help solve them.
- Main national needs that must be met by technical education and vocational training in the period 1980-1989, in the opinion of present supervisors in these areas.
- Priorities given to projects or actions for the improvement of technical education and vocational training in the period 1980-1989 by present officials of the Ministry or Secretariat for Education.
- Attitude of present officials of the Ministry or Secretariat for Education and of the agencies for vocational training, on joint work at the national and international level with other countries and agencies, in appropriately solving the severe problems that limit the upgrading of technical education and vocational training.

4. Relationship between Job Training and Employment

At its twenty-first regular meeting, in February 1980, the Permanent Executive Committee of the Inter-American Council for Education, Science, and Culture approved the holding of four subregional meetings to discuss and clarify the contribution of education towards solving the unemployment problem, especially among the young.

Pursuant to this decision, meetings have been held: in Bridgetown, Barbados (September 1980), San Pedro de Sula, Honduras (October 1980), and Brazil (November 1980), to analyze data obtained on significant events experienced in the countries in their efforts to incorporate the youth sector into the labor force through formal and nonformal training.

In the course of these meetings, innovative experiments were examined with a view to their utilization, conclusions were drawn, and recommendations made. The most relevant are:

1. There exists a wide variety of evaluable experiments in the region to help the member countries in incorporating into the labor force the population deprived of formal education. Nonconventional forms of education that are less expensive, flexible, and suited to the status of development of national needs are preferred in these experiments.
2. Little publicity and data are available on these experiments in nonconventional education carried out in the region, although they are numerous and on the rise, and could prove to be an alternative to the regular educational systems to meet the educational demand.
3. There is an urgent need for the OAS undertake a systematic study of existing experiments, to propose the most advantageous educational alternatives for our socio-economic conditions and national needs, inasmuch as nonformal education is a most appropriate way to provide work for the unemployed and to raise their cultural level.
4. The governments, through their respective institutions, should promote social services and gainful work in an organized, directed, and controlled form, specially aimed to benefit the least favored communities.
5. It is recommended that the General Secretariat of the OAS incorporate the final report, together with the case file and reports from other subregional meetings into the background material, grouped by areas of similarity and significance, and bring them to the attention of educational officials and educational agencies throughout the region.

CHAPTER IV. The Outlook for Cooperation between the OAS and the Community Colleges

1. Characteristics of the Community Colleges and their Field of Action

The community college in the United States began a metamorphosis in the early 1960s as it sought to provide educational opportunity to people who had not had that opportunity before. The college met people where they were and worked with them to adapt educational programs to meet their needs. To learn about the people the institution was teaching, the college moved into the community setting. Relationships were established with the family, the neighborhood center, the manpower development agencies, the social workers, the recreation centers. People found that it provided a place to discuss community issues in an informed way. If there were needs for citizens to organize themselves to deal with housing problems, the college made available appropriate learning experiences so that citizens could learn not only their rights but how to secure those rights.

Many of this nation's community colleges under good leadership became people's colleges. They expressed in educational forms that strong populist movement in America during the 1960s that historians will someday identify as one of the most significant in the evolution of the United States.

The American community college is less understood by people abroad than any of our other educational institutions. They usually have some idea of what a university is like, as well as elementary and secondary schools, and technical and vocational schools. But the comprehensive, community-based, community college is different, and it reflects the value system of this country.

The contemporary period of history is characterized by rapid and unprecedented change in practically all aspects of life.

In the closing years of the 1970s community colleges experienced a "novelty of conditions." The institutions are changing--they have changed from the earlier days of high school extension and the remarkable period of expansion and common orientation of the 1960s.

Most of the participants in community college programs take a course or two while they work full-time or part-time. They are likely to be married and have children, and a majority are either preparing directly for employment or are trying to improve their job situations. 1/

1. Edmund J. Gleazer, Jr. The Community College: Values, Vision & Vitality 1980.

Community colleges now exist in a far more competitive environment than that of the sixties. Developmental education, occupational education, and other services considered by the community colleges to be among their distinctive offerings are found in a growing number of institutions that have a new awareness of the educational market.

The community colleges, obviously, cannot be based on the experience and data of the sixties. They moved into a new and different period and it is essential that the changed environment be recognized. Crucial to the future of community colleges, to their vitality, to their public support, is the definition of their fields of activity.

2. Characteristics

- 1) Access to all.
- 2) A sense of continuing college-level situation is nurtured.
- 3) The college seeks ways to destratify the hierarchy of values, now often institutionalized, of vocational-technical, academic, developmental, and continuing education.
- 4) Flexibility to respond quickly to community needs.
- 5) The quality of flexibility further suggests the needs for performance criteria. 1/

3. The Programs

All community college programs lead to the assumption of increased citizenship involvement, and can be coupled with opportunities for continuing education on a lifelong bases.

The most important field in the educational program in the community colleges is in the Area of Vocational-Technical Education. There are many different career options, including: drafting, electronics, engineering technology, auto mechanics, construction management, data processing-computer, industrial management, radiological technology, radio-television technology, accounting, and a myriad of others.

The community colleges have been in the forefront of the educational revolution, to respond to the accelerating pace of technological development and the requirements of educational opportunity for all citizens and to the insatiable demands for workers with the skills to handle the new technologies. Vocational-technical programs leading to associate degrees area designed to provide immediate entry into employment.

3. Possibilities of Cooperation between the OAS and the Community Colleges in the Field of Technical Education and Vocational Training

- a. To promote the exchange of information on the experience of the Community Colleges and the Multinational Centers on Technical Education and Vocational Training sponsored by the OAS, through its Department of Educational Affairs, in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, and Venezuela.
- b. It is suggested that the OAS seek, through its Department of Educational Affairs, appropriate mechanisms to promote and exchange programs and/or projects, materials or information documents on experience in the field of job training and employment in Latin America.
- c. The number of study missions should be increased, to permit the technical, teaching and administrative staff of the Community Colleges and the Multinational Centers on Technical Education and Vocational Training of the OAS to compare their experience in regard to organization, curricula, methods, training courses, study and research, teaching materials, publications, etc.
- d. To expand the curricula of the Community Colleges to include elements characteristic of Latin America, to promote a better and greater flow of information among the countries of the region and the United States in the field of education.
- e. It is suggested that the Community colleges contemplate the possibility of creating a unit for the institution, continuation, and increase of relations between technical training centers in the Latin American countries, to enable them to form judgments to orient a continuing exchange-of-information action on the international level.
- f. It is suggested that the Community Colleges consider preparing curricular material adapted to the Centers that host the Multinational Projects on Technical Education and Vocational Training of the OAS in several Latin American and Caribbean countries.